

Message Text

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ORIGIN SCS-05

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FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO AMEMBASSY OTTAWA IMMEDIATE

UNCLAS STATE 188199

FOLLOWING REPEAT VANCOUVER 780 SENT ACTION SECSTATE 08 AUG 77

QUOTE UNCLAS VANCOUVER 0780

E.O. 11652: NA

TAGS: CASC: BRESSLER, GARY D.

SUBJECT: W/W: GARY D. BRESSLER

REF: (A) STATE 182155 (B) MORGAN/POWERS TELECONS 8/3, 8/4, 8/8
(C) HOPE/CARTER TELECON 8/5 (D) HOPE/SCS DUTY OFFICER
TELECON 8/5 (E) MORGAN/SCS DUTY OFFICER TELECONS 8/6 & 8/7

1. THE FOLLOWING IS A CHRONOLOGICAL SUMMARY ACCOUNT OF EVENTS WHICH TOOK PLACE AFTER CONGEN WAS NOTIFIED THAT GARY D. BRESSLER HAD DISAPPEARED ON A HIKING TRIP IN THE STRATHCONA NATIONAL PARK. THE PERSONS MENTIONED IN THE REFERENCES ABOVE ARE RAECAROL MORGAN AND JOHN HOPE, CONSULS, VANCOUVER AND ELIZABETH POWERS, SCS OFFICER.

2. ON AUGUST 3, 1977, MORGAN FIRST CALLED RESCUE COORDINATION CENTER, VANCOUVER AND THEN TELEPHONED TO STAFF SGT. DAVIDSON, OFFICER-IN-CHARGE OF RCMP, CAMPBELL RIVER. DAVIDSON SAID THAT THE FOUR COMPANIONS OF BRESSLER HAD REPORTED HIM MISSING AT UNCLASSIFIED

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QOPP JULY 31, 1977 WHEN BRESSLER, WHO HAD GONE OFF ON HIS OWN, HAD NOT APPEARED AT THE APPOINTED MEETING PLACE ON JULY 26. PRIOR TO REPORTING BRESSLER MISSING, THE FOUR HAD SEARCHED FOR HIM THEMSELVES AND THEN DUE TO HEAVY FOG WERE UNABLE TO GET TO RCMP CAMPBELL RIVER UNTIL JULY 31. BRESSLER REPORTED TO BE EXPERIENCED AND WITH FOOD FOR FIVE DAYS, A MIRROR AND DRY MATCHES. HE WAS WEARING BRIGHT BLUE JACKET AND CARRYING BRIGHT ORANGE BACK-

PACK. MORNING OF AUGUST 2 HELICOPTER WITH FOUR SPOTTERS SENT INTO AREA. IT WAS THOUGHT BRESSLER MIGHT HEAR HELICOPTER AND SIGNAL THEM BUT NO SUCCESS. ON AUGUST 3 HELICOPTER WITH ONE OF BRESSLER'S COMPANIONS WENT IN TO PINPOINT PLACE BRESSLER HAD LAST BEEN SEEN AND TO SEARCH AT LOWER ALTITUDE. AFTERNOON OF 8/3/77 FOUR EXPERIENCED SEARCHERS AND TWO DOGS WERE SENT IN. AREA MOUNTAINOUS WITH CLIFFS UP TO 1500 FEET.

3. 8/4/77. DAVIDSON REPORTED MEN AND DOGS HAD SEARCHED UNTIL 7:30 PM 8/3/77. AT 6:00 AM 8/4/77 TEN TRAINED MOUNTAINEERS FROM THE PROVINCIAL EMERGENCY PROGRAM AND TWO PARAMEDICS FROM CANADIAN FORCES WENT IN FOR GROUND SEARCH. IT WAS PLANNED FOR THEM TO SPLIT UP INTO TWO GROUPS TO SEARCH CLIFFS AND VALLEY FLOOR WHICH IS REPORTED DENSELY COVERED WITH VEGETATION. CLIFFS IN AREA OF SHALE AND VERY HARD TO CLIMB. THERE IS REPORTED TO BE PLENTY OF NATURAL FOOD AVAILABLE SO IT WAS DOUBTED BEAR OR COUGAR IN AREA WOULD ATTACK UNLESS CORNERED. THERE ARE NOT MANY BIRDS IN AREA BUT THERE ARE TURKEY VULTURES, RAVEN AND CROWS. NO CIRCLING OF SUCH BIRDS SPOTTED.

4. ABOVE REPORTED BY MORGAN TO POWERS WHO ASKED THAT MORGAN TRY LOCATE BRESSLER'S SISTER MARCIA BUCK, AS BRESSLER'S PARENTS HAD NOT BEEN NOTIFIED. MORGAN CALLED SGT. DAVIDSON AGAIN AND HE STATED MARCIA AND OTHER THREE HAD REMAINED AT THEIR BASE CAMP WHERE BRESSLER LEFT HIS VEHICLE. DAVIDSON PROMISED GET MESSAGE TO MARCIA THAT SHE SHOULD CALL MORGAN. THIS INFORMATION WAS UNCLASSIFIED

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REPORTED TO SCS/POWERS BY PHONE. ABOUT 10:40 AM, STILL ON 8/4/77, DON RAMADEN, BROADCAST NEWS, RADIO ARM OF CANADIAN PRESS CALLED TO SAY HE PLANNED PUT STORY ON WIRE SERVICE, BUT WANTED TO CONFIRM BRESSLER FAMILY HAD BEEN NOTIFIED. MORGAN INFORMED HIM SHE DID NOT BELIEVE PARENTS HAD BEEN NOTIFIED AS FATHER CRITICALLY ILL IN HOSPITAL. HE AGREED DELAY UNTIL MORGAN CALLED SCS. UNABLE LOCATE POWERS BY PHONE, BUT WHEN CALLED RAMADEN BACK HE STATED WOULD REFER TO BRESSLER ONLY AS "20-YEAR OLD AMERICAN HIKER." RAMADEN DID NOT THINK US WIRE SERVICES WOULD PICK UP ON IT.

5. AT 12:50 MORGAN TALKED TO MARCIA BUCK. SHE HAD FOUND DRY MATCHES AND MIRROR IN HER PACK SO BRESSLER DID NOT HAVE SUCH AS FIRST BELIEVED. MARCIA SAID HER BROTHER WAS BORN AT WICHITA, KANSAS 10/31/56. FULL NAME IS GARY D. BRESSLER. UNMARRIED. MARCIA HAD DELAYED CALLING HER MOTHER, AS NOT ONLY IS FATHER IN HOSPITAL, BUT MOTHER HAS HAD 2-3 HEART ATTACKS. MORGAN INFORMED HER OF PRESS CALL AND MENTIONED SCS PLANNED INFORM SENATOR DOLE'S OFFICE IN HOPE THE BUCKS WOULD INFORM MRS. BRESSLER. MARCIA ASKED THAT STORY BE KEPT OUT OF PRESS. MORGAN AGAIN EXPLAINED WHAT HAD BEEN DONE TO DATE AND URGED MARCIA TO CALL HER MOTHER. MARCIA SAID SHE WOULD CALL THE BUCKS TO SEE IF THEY HAD INFORMED HER MOTHER AND THEN WOULD CALL HER MOTHER.

6. MORGAN RELAYED TO SCS/POWERS THE SUBSTANCE OF HER CONVERSATION WITH MARCIA. POWERS ASKED THAT MORGAN CONFIRM WITH MARCIA THAT SHE HAD CALLED HER MOTHER AND GET ADDRESSES FOR BRESSLERS AND BUCKS. MORGAN CALLED SGT. DAVIDSON BACK IMMEDIATELY, BUT MARCIA HAD ALREADY LEFT HIS OFFICE. DAVIDSON SAID MARCIA HAD TOLD HIM SHE WAS GOING TO JOIN HUSBAND AND THEY WOULD TELEPHONE THE BUCKS AND MRS. BRESSLER. THE ADDRESS GIVEN THE RCMP FOR GARY BRESSLER WAS 4620 E. 93RD ST. NORTH, VALLEY CENTER, KANSAS. DAVIDSON DID NOT KNOW IF THIS IS HIS PARENTS ADDRESS.

7. ABOUT 1:30 PM NANCY SMITH, SENATOR DOLE S OFFICE CALLED AND INFORMED MORGAN MRS. BRESSLER WAS TO BE TOLD BY MRS. BUCK. SHE SAID MRS. BRESSLER AND MRS. BUCK CAN BE REACHED AT 316-683-6779.
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IM IXTXUUM IN ABSENCE OF MORGAN HOPE CALLED DAVIDSON TO LEARN SEARCH WAS CONTINUING. NO SIGN OF BRESSLER OR HIS EQUIPMENT. TEN CLIMBERS FROM VANCOUVER WERE TO JOIN THE SEARCH. A CANADIAN FORCES HELICOPTER FROM COMOX HAD JOINED SEARCH. HOPE REPORTED THIS INFORMATION BY PHONE TO SCS DUTY OFFICER..

9. 8/6/77. MORGAN CALLED RCMP CAMPBELL RIVER AND WAS INFORMED 30 TO 40 MEN, TWO DOGS AND TWO HELICOPTERS IN AREA SEARCHING. GOOD WEATHER STILL HOLDING. THIS REPORTED TO SCS DUTY OFFICER.

10. 8/7/77. MORGAN CALLED RCMP CAMPBELL RIVER. WAS INFORMED STATUS SAME AS SATURDAY AND REPORTED THIS TO SCS DUTY OFFICER. AT ABOUT 10:00 PM SEARCHERS CALLED OFF SEARCH. HOPE SO NOTIFIED. MORGAN CALLED STATE DEPARTMENT OPERATIONS CENTER AND LEFT MESSAGE FOR SCS DUTY OFFICER.

11. MORNING 8/8/77. MORGAN CALLED RCMP CAMPBELL RIVER. TALKED TO SGT. JOHNSON WHO STATED HE HAD INFORMED THE PRESS THAT SEARCH HAD BEEN TEMPORARILY HALTED. IT WAS JOHNSON'S UNDERSTANDING THAT MARCIA BUCK, CRAIG WOODMAN AND RON REIDLE (GARY BUCK WAS NOT AT CAMPSITE) HAD BEEN SO NOTIFIED. REPORTEDLY, MARCIA CRIED AND WOODMAN AND REIDLE WERE RATHER HOSTILE, THREATENING TO GO IN THEMSELVES AND SEARCH. HOWEVER BEFORE SEARCHERS LEFT, MARCIA THANKED SEARCHERS AND AGREED SHE AND OTHERS WOULD SEE SGT. DAVIDSON AT CAMPBELL RIVER AT 1:00 PM 8/8/77 FOR FULL REPORT ON SEARCH CONDUCTED. SEARCHERS HAD FOUND FISHING ROD, WHICH GARY BUCH IDENTIFIED AS BRESSLER'S. ROD WAS FOUND ON RIDGE NEAR WHERE BRESSLER WAS LAST SEEN. AREA WAS SEARCHED VERY THOROUGHLY.

12. AFTERNOON 8/8/77. CG LUPPI AND MORGAN SPOKE WITH SGT. DAVIDSON AND WITH MR. BUCK, FATHER-IN-LAW OF MARCIA, WHO HAD ARRIVED IN CAMPBELL RIVER. SGT. DAVIDSON SAID THAT ALTHOUGH
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GROUND SEARCH TEMPORARILY HALTED HE DID HAVE PLANS TO CONTINUE THE SEARCH IN SEVERAL WAYS. HE IS CHECKING INTO THE POSSIBILITY THAT AIRBORNE HEAT-SENSING EQUIPMENT MIGHT BE EMPLOYED TO LOCATE BRESSLER IF HE IS ALIVE. HE SAID HE UNDERSTANDS SUCH EQUIPMENT WAS DEVELOPED IN VIETNAM TO LOCATE HIDDEN VIET CONG. IF THE EQUIPMENT COULD BE MADE AVAILABLE AND WOULD BE EFFECTIVE IN THAT TERRAIN, IT COULD BE PUT ABOARD ONE OF THE THREE LABRADOR HELICOPTERS OF THE RESCUE COORDINATION CENTER AT COMOX ON VANCOUVER ISLAND. HE IS ALSO TRYING TO GET UP A SEARCH TEAM OF SOME HALF DOZEN PERSONS WITH DOGS. HE PLANS, TOO, TO SEND SOME SPOTTERS IN THE AREA WHERE BRESSLER WAS LOST TO LOOK FOR CIRCLING BIRDS.

13. MR. BUCK INDICATED THAT HE THOUGHT THE RCMP HAD DONE A VERY SUBSTANTIAL JOB TO DATE. LIKE THE RCMP, HE DOES NOT WANT THE COMPANIONS OF BRESSLER--INCLUDING HIS SON AND DAUGHTER-IN-LAW--TO GO BACK IN THE AREA AND SEARCH ON THEIR OWN. APPARENTLY YESTERDAY EVENING THEY WERE VERY MUCH OF A MIND TO DO SO BUT MR. BUCK FEELS THAT HE HAS NOW DISSUADED THEM FROM SUCH. HE COMMENTED THAT THE AREA OF BRESSLER'S DISAPPEARANCE IS OBVIOUSLY EXTREMELY TREACHEROUS AND HE DOES NOT WANT ANYBODY ELSE TO GET HURT. BUCK SAID THAT HE TENTATIVELY PLANS TO LEAVE TOMORROW BY CAR FOR SEATTLE AND WILL STOP AT THE CONSULATE GENERAL ENROUTE.

LUPPI

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